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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem
and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory**

Security Council
Seventy-first year

**Identical letters dated 14 November 2016 from the
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of
the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and
the President of the Security Council**

I write to alert you to the critical situation that continues to prevail in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, owing to Israel's relentless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people. On a daily basis, the occupying Power persists with its grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, which are exacerbating the humanitarian situation on the ground, intensifying the hardships faced by the Palestinian people and diminishing any real hope or possibility of achieving peace on the basis of the two-State solution.

Over the years, we have conveyed hundreds of letters to you, particularly during intensely difficult and dark moments faced by the Palestinian civilian population under Israel's nearly half-century occupation. We have repeatedly appealed to the international community, especially the Security Council, to uphold the Charter and the obligation to respect and ensure respect of international law, including by determining measures to compel Israel to end its war crimes and human rights violations against the Palestinian people. The consensus on this is clear: such respect is imperative, not only to stem the deterioration of the situation and alleviate human suffering in the immediate term, but to salvage the long-term prospects for peace and expedite realization of the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, including the rights to self-determination and freedom, which have been forcefully withheld from them for far too long.

Regrettably, our calls have fallen on deaf ears and the international community, in specific the Security Council, continues to fail to uphold its obligations despite the international community's unanimity on both the illegality of Israel's policies and practices against the Palestinian people, including its measures of settlement colonization throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and



its nearly 10-year blockade of the Gaza Strip in an act of gross and massive collective punishment against our people. One of the main tragedies of the inaction by the international community is that it has unquestionably emboldened Israel to persist with its destructive policies and practices against the defenceless Palestinian population, including, *inter alia*, the use of excessive force against Palestinian civilians, including children and women, causing death and injury. And, as has been the case throughout the decades, Palestinian children are inordinately bearing the brunt of this increasingly oppressive, violent and illegal Israeli occupation.

Alongside the constant oppression of the Palestinian people, the occupying Power has been unrelenting in its illegal colonization practices, with settlement and wall construction and all related measures, including confiscation of land, demolition of homes and forced displacement of civilians, continuing unabated in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and constituting a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The destructive impact of such Israeli violations is immense and has caused further decline of socioeconomic conditions, inflamed tensions and anger among the Palestinian civilian population and deepened their hopelessness.

While it is impossible to record each and every crime committed by Israeli occupying forces and terrorist settlers against the Palestinian people, the record below accounts for some of the many Israeli crimes since our previous letter on 7 October 2016, all clearly reflecting policies aimed at dehumanizing and denying the rights of the Palestinian civilian population, traumatizing generation after generation under this illegal occupation.

9 October 2016

Israeli occupying forces demolished eight homes in the Bedouin community of Khan Al-Ahmar in the central West Bank, forcibly displacing and leaving homeless 28 Palestinians, 18 of them children.

20 October 2016

Israeli occupying forces shot and killed Khalid Bahr Ahmad Bahr, age 15. The boy was shot in the back, with the bullet exiting through his chest. In a clear continuation of Israel's "shoot-to-kill" policy, Israeli soldiers shot Khalid in the back because he was allegedly throwing stones. The fact that he was shot three times in the back clearly disproves the bogus claim that the Israeli forces felt under threat.

26 October 2016

Israel, the occupying Power, demolished a four-apartment building in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Silwan of Occupied East Jerusalem under the pretext of "construction without permission". Israeli forces, accompanied by armed bulldozers, broke into the area in the early morning hours and demolished the building owned by four brothers from the Ja'afreh family, displacing 30 people, including women and children. Issa Ja'afreh, owner of one of the apartments, said he and his brothers had been fighting the demolition order for nine years, hoping to get a building permit from the occupying Power but to no avail. Besides the cruel

and illegal demolition of their homes, they have been ordered to pay demolition costs estimated at nearly 40,000 United States dollars.

27 October 2016

The so-called Israeli municipality announced its intention to construct 180 illegal settlement units in the illegal settlement "Gilo" in Occupied East Jerusalem.

29 October 2016

Ahmad Hamed was shot and severely injured by an Israeli occupying soldier who was manning a military checkpoint near the town of Silwad, east of Ramallah. Hamed was shot by three bullets in the right leg, stomach and right shoulder causing rupture of the lung and fractured ribs. The bullet lodged in the liver and he remains in critical condition.

30 October 2016

Khalid Ahmad Elayyan Ikhlayyil, 23, was killed by Israeli occupying forces near the village of Beit Ummar near Al-Khalil in the vicinity of the illegal settlement bloc of "Gush Etzion".

1 November 2016

The occupying Power raised an Israeli flag at the eastern entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, also known as the Church of the Resurrection, in Occupied East Jerusalem. The Higher Presidential Committee of Church Affairs in Palestine condemned this illegal action, stressing that it constitutes a clear violation of the sanctity of the holy site and the historic status quo that has been in place for decades, including that the occupying Power shall not raise any flags on Muslim or Christian religious properties.

2 November 2016

Israeli occupying forces detained at least 28 Palestinians, including a woman and five children aged 15, 16 and 17 years, during overnight raids in the occupied West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem.

Israeli occupying forces demolished a two-story residence in Beit Hanina, a neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem, displacing more Palestinian families.

3 November 2016

Maen Nasser al-Din Abu Qaraa, age 23, from the village of al-Mazraa al-Qibliyaa, was killed by Israeli occupying forces after allegedly attempting to stab an Israeli soldier who was guarding a bus stop near the illegal settlement of "Ofra" near Ramallah. Occupying forces reportedly prevented Palestinian medics from approaching the scene, leaving him to bleed to death. He is the 238th Palestinian to be killed by Israeli occupying forces or settlers since the recent cycle of violence began in October 2015.

Israeli occupying forces detained at least 22 Palestinians, including nine members of the Abu Shousheh family, during overnight raids across the West Bank.

Israeli soldiers also ransacked a shop located beneath Abu Shouseh's house and confiscated a number of vehicles. Also, in Occupied East Jerusalem, so-called Israeli forces raided the Jabal Al-Mukabbir neighbourhood, forcibly searching two homes and detaining four Palestinians from the Ewesat family, including three brothers.

Occupying forces demolished two storage warehouses and a butchery in Beita, south of Nablus.

4 November 2016

Israeli occupying forces reportedly banned the Muslim call to dawn prayer from the loudspeakers of three mosques in the town of Abu Dis. Israeli soldiers raided the town just before the dawn prayer on Friday, 4 November, and raided the Al-Rahman, Al-Taybeh and Al-Jamia mosques in the town and issued a ban on the call for dawn prayer through the loudspeakers, in a clear violation of the fundamental right of freedom to worship. The events in Abu Dis came a day after a number of illegal Israeli settlers from the illegal settlement of "Pisgat Zeev" protested in front of the house of so-called Mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barakat, over the "noise pollution" caused by the Muslim call to prayer.

6 November 2016

Israeli naval forces opened fire at Palestinian fishermen off the coast of Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip. According to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Israeli forces detained 71 fishermen and confiscated 22 fishing boats throughout 2015. The Centre reported that Israeli naval forces had also opened fire on Palestinian fishermen at least 139 times over the course of the year in the blockaded Gaza Strip, wounding 24 persons and damaging 16 fishing boats.

7 November 2016

An Israeli court sentenced a 14-year-old Palestinian boy, Ahmad Manasra, to 12 years in prison. Manasra was convicted of attempted murder for carrying out an alleged stabbing attack on 12 October 2015 that injured two Israeli settlers near the illegal settlement of "Pisgat Zeev" in the Beit Hanina neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem. In addition to the sentencing of a child to a 12-year prison sentence, the so-called court also imposed a fine on his family of over 45,000 United States dollars.

It should be mentioned that during the alleged attack, Ahmad's cousin Hassan Khalid Manasra, age 15, was shot dead at the scene by occupying forces, while Ahmad was hit by a car and seriously wounded. A video was taken of young Ahmad lying injured and bleeding on the ground, with an Israeli onlooker clearly heard saying: "Die, son of a wh***! Die!" while another tells the Israeli police officer to shoot him. The cruel treatment of Ahmad continued after his detention as Israeli forces cursed and verbally abused the boy, who at the time was 13 years old.

Ahmad's trial was also postponed several times, leaving many to conclude that the move to delay the case until he turned 14 in January 2016 was deliberately made to facilitate sentencing when he would be old enough under Israeli law for a prison sentence. It is important to note, that according to a report issued in September 2016

by the Palestinian Committee of Prisoners' Affairs, at least 1,000 Palestinian children between the ages of 11 and 18 have been detained by Israel since January 2016, many of whom have been abused and tortured while in detention. According to the Palestinian prisoners' rights group Addameer, a total of 340 Palestinian children are currently being incarcerated by Israel.

9 November 2016

Muhammad Amr, age 32, from the city of Tulkarem was critically wounded by live ammunition shot by Israeli occupying forces at the entrance of the village of Huwwara near Nablus. The occupying Power alleged that Muhammad tried to stab an Israeli soldier while witnesses at the scene claimed that Muhammad was only attempting to cross the street before being shot.

As evidenced by the mounting list of human rights violations and international humanitarian law violations, Israel, the occupying Power, remains in complete disrespect and contempt of the law, causing endless destruction, suffering and anguish for the Palestinian people. We repeat today our appeal to the international community to protect our people, as a matter of urgency and in accordance with international law. Moreover, we call for urgent action to compel Israel to completely halt its illegal colonization of the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. This is imperative to stem the deterioration and reverse the dangerous reality on the ground, as repeatedly stressed by the international community, including the Quartet. The international community must unequivocally demand an end to all of these Israeli violations and the Security Council in specific cannot be absolved of its responsibilities. The time is long overdue to stop Israel from acting as a State above the law and to finally end this illegal occupation in all its manifestations.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 597 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 7 October 2016 (A/ES-10/734-S/2016/848), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Feda Abdelhady-Nasser
Charge d'affaires a.i.

**General Assembly
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22 December 2016

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5**Security Council**
Seventy-first year**Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and
the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory****Identical letters dated 20 December 2016 from the Permanent
Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly
and the President of the Security Council**

As the Security Council continues its deliberations on the question of Palestine month after month, amid constant calls by the international community for responsible action in line with its Charter duties, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to exploit the Council's inaction with the continuation and intensification of its illegal and destructive policies and practices, in particular in connection with its colonial settlement enterprise, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

At this time, we must officially place on record our total condemnation of all Israeli schemes to violate, distort and undermine all laws applicable to this situation. In this regard, the so-called Israeli "regulation bill", which attempts to give so-called "legal status" to dozens of illegal Israeli settlements and "outposts" constructed on private Palestinian land in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, constitutes yet another provocative and flagrantly illegal action by the occupying Power. This scheme clearly aims at further consolidating Israel's illegal settlement enterprise and further privileging its illegal settlers on our land. On 7 December 2016, this bill was given initial approval by the Israeli Knesset, and, if ultimately passed, it would further entrench 55 illegal "outposts" and approximately 4,000 more units in illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in direct and grave breach of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention and article 49 thereof.

International law is crystal clear: the acquisition of territory by force and the transfer of the civilians of the occupying Power into the occupied territory are explicitly prohibited under international law. Israeli settlements, regardless of their classification by the occupying Power, are thus illegal in every manifestation. As such, while the proposed bill attempts to "legalize" so-called "outposts" on

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Palestinian land, it must be clarified that all Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are illegal, as are the more than 600,000 settlers currently residing there.

Here, it is relevant to point out that Peace Now, an Israeli human rights organization, views the "regulation law" as "a grand land robbery, which will lead not only to the expropriation of 8,000 dunums of private Palestinian lands but might also rob Israelis and Palestinians of the possibility of arriving at a two-State solution". Many other human rights organizations have warned that this action will just embolden the Israeli settlement drive and bring many more illegal settlers to these "outposts-turned-settlements", accelerating the expansion of the illegal settler population as a whole in the Occupied West Bank, including Occupied East Jerusalem. Moreover, compounding the illegality of such a provocative bill is the fact that it would also severely violate the Palestinian right to property, a basic human and civil right, as well as explicitly discriminate against Palestinian civilians in favour of Israeli settlers illegally transferred to the West Bank. Peace Now has noted with alarm that "direct and separate Knesset legislation regarding the West Bank, particularly when it applies to the Palestinians residing there, is *de facto* annexation of the West Bank".

In addition to the prohibitions stipulated in the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Convention of 1907 also prohibits the occupying Power from making any permanent changes in the territories occupied that are not undertaken in accordance with a narrow definition of military necessity or for the purpose of benefiting the local population. Over the nearly 50 years of Israel's foreign military and colonial occupation, it has carried out its settlement campaign throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in deliberate and flagrant violation of both sets of law. The unanimous, firm and long-standing position of the international community in this regard — that settlements are illegal and threaten the viability of the two-State solution based on the 1967 borders — is clearly based on an unambiguous, principled reading of, and respect for, the law.

The international community has been clear in its condemnation of and opposition to the occupying Power's so-called "regulation law". Nikolay Mladenov, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, has stated that "the so-called 'legalization bill' has the objective of protecting illegal settlements and outposts built on private Palestinian property in the West Bank" and confirmed that "some have pronounced it to be a step towards the annexation of the West Bank". In addition, a European Union spokesperson has stated, "recalling that settlements are illegal under international law, constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make the two-State solution impossible, the European Union reiterates its strong position, in line with the position of the Middle East Quartet, to Israel's settlement policy and all actions taken in this context". Moreover, United States Secretary of State John Kerry has called the bill "really concerning", adding that Israel was "heading to a place of danger" as settlement building narrows the prospects for peace and the two-State solution.

Indeed, such illegal and provocative Israeli actions, along with constant inflammatory rhetoric, including by officials in Prime Minister Netanyahu's Government, many of whom have publicly stated their opposition to a Palestinian State or that "there will be no Palestinian State", must be cause for both alarm and

action by the international community. Moreover, it must be pointed out that Israeli officials continue to praise and support this dangerous and illegal bill. For example, Israeli Education Minister Naftali Bennett has applauded the bill and stated that the preliminary support by the Knesset is a move towards annexing that region. Specifically, he stated after the bill passed its first reading that "the Israeli Knesset moved from heading towards establishing a Palestinian State to heading towards sovereignty in Judea and Samaria" and that "the 'outpost regulation bill' is the tip of the iceberg in applying sovereignty".

Clearly, the international appeals to Israel to cease all such illegal behaviour continue to be blatantly ignored and flouted by the Israeli Government, requiring more serious and tangible efforts to address these developments before it is too late. As stated by Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, "such a bill constitutes a legal travesty. Israel is persistently and wilfully legislating outside the realm of international law in order to legalize its criminal settlement agenda, considered a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court." She further stated that it was clear that the right-wing extremist Israeli Government was deliberately escalating its illegal settlement enterprise and stealing Palestinian land and resources in and around East Jerusalem and in "Area C" in order to destroy the two-State solution and to superimpose "Greater Israel" on all of historical Palestine.

Taking all of this into consideration, along with the never-ending announcements made by Israel, including announcements in November and December of this year regarding the building of more settlement units in the illegal settlements of "Gilo" and "Ramat Shlomo", in Occupied East Jerusalem, we call on the international community, in particular the Security Council, to finally act to redress this illegal situation. The occupying Power must be held accountable for its dangerous, unlawful policies of land theft, colonization, territorial expansion and oppression of the Palestinian people and for taking us ever further away from the realization of the two-State solution.

The Security Council must send a strong and unanimous message to Israel to cease all of its settlement activities and that neither settlement construction nor so-called "bills" regarding the "legal status" of its settlements will ever be tolerated or recognized by the international community. In particular, we call on the Security Council to adopt a resolution condemning settlement activities and calling for their immediate cessation and reversal. The international community must act, in accordance with its legal obligations and political and moral responsibilities, before Israel buries the two-State solution once and for all, with all of the consequences in this regard.

In addition to the above-mentioned alarming developments, I must inform you that Palestinian homes and properties continue to be seized and demolished at unprecedented rates. Palestinian families continue to be forcibly displaced, callously dispossessed and rendered homeless and destitute. All of this is being done in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and against the backdrop of the Security Council's long-running paralysis on this critical matter. Moreover, innocent Palestinian civilians continue to be killed and injured by the Israeli occupying forces and by extremist Israeli settlers. This includes the killing, on 18 December 2016, of a young Palestinian teenager, Ahmed Hazem Rimawi, age 19, in the village

of Beit Rima in northern Ramallah in the Occupied West Bank. Ahmed was shot in the heart by an occupation soldier and died immediately. Palestinian civilians also continue to be arrested by the dozen daily and continue to be imprisoned and detained, including Anas Ibrahim Shadid, 20, and Ahmad Abu Farah, 29, two administrative detainees who are currently on hunger strike in protest against their arbitrary detention and face imminent death owing to the severe deterioration of their health. We call for their immediate release and an end to the captivity and inhumane treatment of all Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

Haven't the Palestinian people suffered enough at the hands of the occupying Power? The answer is yes, but the question remains if the international community, with the Security Council at the forefront, will finally rise up to meet its responsibilities under international law. The time is past due for serious action to uphold and compel respect for international law, to bring a halt to Israel's violations against the Palestinian people and to contribute seriously and tangibly to bringing an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace under which the Palestinian people can finally attain their freedom, rights and justice and under which peace and security can become a reality for both peoples.

This letter is in follow-up to our 598 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 14 November 2016 (A/ES-10/735-S/2016/961) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Riyad Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer
of the State of Palestine to the United Nations